

Martyn's France / Spain Venture September 2023

Once again Martyn came up with a varied / superb 12-day adventure for himself plus 5 other hanger on-errs. He had the foresight to wear a red crash helmet, greatly assisting all us followers through junctions / roundabouts during the trip.

It all started with a blast down the "scenic" M5 / A38 to board the overnight ferry sailing from Plymouth. Arriving at Roscoff in the morning having not received much rest overnight, plus an unexpected swift disembark one hour earlier than planned left us all a bit zombified! Still, eager to set off and venture into France even though it's still dark!

Temperatures were hot most days, so coffee & lunch breaks were welcome plus some afternoon stops when time permitted prior to arriving at our hotels.

Over the next few days, we progressed down the west side of France enjoying long straight roads mostly having an excellent surface.

Martyn's planning wisdom provided a range of varied quality accommodation but my experience was, all were clean / functional plus we moved on each day.

Restaurants were "interesting" especially in Spain when they opened late so our choices were limited and some curious cuisine "digested" well sort of ("caw") group members will recognise!!

Crossing the Pyrenees was a highlight for me, not toured there previously, fantastic roads climbing / falling incorporating lots of bendy switchbacks again most with excellent surfaces!! Enjoying a relaxed lunch gave the opportunity to explore a rail station used during WW2 transporting ill-gotten gains and prisoners. The Canfranc station has recently been restored into a now luxury hotel having views of the Pyrenees as a backdrop.

Sadly, Martyn hadn't reserved Canfranc as one of our overnight stops!!

The previous week, Madrid area had suffered heavy rainfall / floods rendering some roads impassable due to levels of mud causing a diversion for part of the route.

Not sure how we managed it but we rode dodging the rain either ahead, to the side or above but during the whole trip we only experienced a few drops and Chris's right pannier had carried Rosie's heavy jacket most of the way!

I can only describe it as a great trip, Martyn coordinated the whole thing superbly, was considerate in accommodating fuel stops especially mine being the smallest tank and always assisting with the "duo lingo" at restaurants / bars!

Thanks to all the group for being great company throughout the trip, once back I missed the regular Triumph V GS banter!! We had great fun and most importantly all arrived back safe with nobody breaking down or coming off!!

From us all, a huge thank you Martyn.